

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

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TAGS: ETEL, CA, EIND

SUBJECT: CANADIAN COMPUTER COMMUNICATIONS POLICY.

REF : STATE 205309

1. TCO MET OCTOBER 18 WITH DOUGLAS PARKHILL, ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, UNDER WHOSE AEGIS THE GREEN PAPERS WERE PREPARED, AND INFORMED HIM AS INSTRUCTED REFTEL. PARKHILL INDICATED APPRECIATION OF USG INTEREST AND IN GENERAL TERMS WAS RECEPTIVE TO IDEA OF CONSULTATIONS. HOWEVER, HE CAUTIONED THAT GIVEN THE VASTNESS AND COMPLEXITY OF THE COMPUTER COMMUNICATIONS POLICY EXERCISE, WE SHOULD NOT EXPECT THAT IT WILL EVER BE FINALIZED IN ONE MAJOR ACT OF GOVERNMENT (E.G. COMPREHENSIVE LEGISLATION). RATHER, THERE WILL BE A VARIETY OF INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS TAKEN ADMINISTRATIVELY UNDER THE CORPUS OF EXISTING LAW AND/OR IN COOPERATION WITH INDUSTRY AND THE PROVINCES, AS WELL AS PERHAPS SOME HIGHLY SPECIFIC PIECES OF LEGISLATION TO CORRECT SOMETHING WHICH REQUIRES PARTICULAR TREATMENT. THE INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON COMPUTER COMMUNICATIONS POLICY AND PROGRAM COORDINATION, UNDER DR. H.J. VON BAEYER, IS NOW A WELL-ESTABLISHED ENTITY WHICH HAS SPAWNED SOME 17 SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS DEALING WITH PARTICULAR TOPICS AND ENGAGING IN THEIR OWN CONSULTATIONS WITH INDUSTRY AND THE PROVINCES. IT IS FROM THE WORK

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OF THESE SUBSIDIARY BODIES THAT SPECIFIC ACTIONS WILL EMANATE

AND TOGETHER WILL ADD UP TO THE EMBODIMENT OF A NATIONAL POLICY. FURTHERMORE, A MEETING OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL MINISTERS OF COMMUNICATION WILL TAKE PLACE LATE IN NOVEMBER WHICH WILL RESULT IN ITS OWN TRAIN OF SPECIFIC ACTIONS.

2. PARKHILL ALLUDED TO THE LACK OF COMPREHENSIVE GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURES IN THIS FIELD IN THE U.S. AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (HE STATED CANADA WAS UNIQUE IN ITS DEGREE OF ORGANIZATION) AND CONSEQUENTLY WAS HESITANT WITH RESPECT TO THE SPECIFIC FORM WHICH APPROPRIATE CONSULTATION MIGHT BEST TAKE. HE POINTED TO THE SIDE RANGE OF PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL CONTACTS CONTINUALLY MAINTAINED BY CANADIAN OFFICIALS IN THIS AREA WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN THE USG. INDEED, AT THIS MOMENT, DR. VON BAEYER IS ATTENDING SUCH A MEETING UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE US DEPT. OF COMMERCE AT BOULDER, COLORADO. AT ONE POINT, PARKHILL FELT THAT PERHAPS THE OECD SEMINAR ON COMPUTER COMMUNICATIONS, TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR THE FALL OF 1974, MIGHT BE A SUITABLE OCCASION FOR US-CANADA DIALOGUE OR MIGHT PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR SUBSEQUENT DIALOGUE ON THE BASIS OF COMMON PRINCIPLES. (THIS SEMINAR HAS ITS ORIGIN IN THE WORK OF AN OECD PANEL IN WHICH PARKHILL HAS A PROMINENT LEADERSHIP ROLE.) TCO, HOWEVER, REMINDED HIM, AND HE QUICKLY AGREED, THAT THERE WERE MANY ASPECTS OF THESE ISSUES WHICH WERE PECULIARLY OF A NORTH AMERICAN NATURE AND WHICH WOULD DESERVE BILATERAL ATTENTION IN APPROPRIATE FORUM. WE REVIEWED TOPICS MENTIONED AT THE END OF REFTEL AND ATTEMPTED TO GIVE THEM A MORE SPECIFIC POSSIBLE CONTENT, BUT BOTH RECOGNIZED THE BROAD CHARACTER OF EACH. SHOULD CONSULTATIVE MEETINGS BE ARRANGED, MORE PRECISE FORMULATION OF TOPICS FOR AN AGENDA WOULD BE NECESSARY.

3. TCO TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO MEET NEXT THURSDAY (EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE) FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH VON BAEYER AND WILL REPORT ACCORDINGLY. IN THE MEANTIME, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO AMPLIFY CONTENTS OF REFTEL FOR OUR USE AT THIS MEETING AND ALSO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO POSSIBLE NOTE FROM EMBASSY TO EXTAFF INDICATING, AS SPECIFICALLY AS POSSIBLE, NATURE OF OUR INTERESTS AND PROPOSING A MORE SPECIFIC FORM OF CONSULTATION AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL. WE MIGHT ALSO SUGGEST A SPECIFIC TIME LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PERIOD WHEN WE WOULD LIKE TO MEET AS AGREEMENT ON AN APPROXIMATE TIME SHOULD PROVIDE AN ADEQUATE INCENTIVE TO BOTH SIDES TO FIRM UP TOPICS AND VIEWS THEREON. SHOULD SUCH CONSULTATION BE ARRANGED, IT IS LIKELY THAT GOC WILL ALSO SUGGEST TOPICS. FOR EXAMPLE, PARKHILL INDICATED HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT IT MIGHT BE DESIRABLE TO ESTABLISH A FREE TRADE ARRANGEMENT IN COMPUTER HARDWARE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND THAT THIS WOULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES OF BOTH NATIONS.

WE MAY EXPECT OTHER WIDE RANGING THOUGHTS FROM THE GOC
ANXIOUS TO EXPAND THE EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ITS INDUSTRIES
IN THIS FIELD WHILE AT THE SAME TIME SEEKING TO CONTROL EXPANSION
OF US INDUSTRY IN CANADA.
SCHMIDT

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